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ABSTRACT

Since the late 1980's the British educational system has experienced a roller-coaster of policy changes. The focus and content of these changes have varied over time and among different parts of the educational system. The repositioning of organizations within public education is examined in this paper. It outlines the similarities and differences between the policy contexts facing schools and colleges in terms of Clarke and Newman's new field of forces. These changes are then related to the concept of managerialism, which is becoming an increasingly important part of the discourse about public-sector reforms in the United Kingdom. Some of the changes taking place in the management of schools and colleges as a result of reforms are outlined, followed by some general conclusions regarding factors that may have affected the different experiences of institutions as they have attempted to respond to new pressures. The text shows how policy developments in the schools and in higher education have shown important similarities, and it charts the rise of managerialism and its commitment to a series of cross-cutting attachments and to client-centered, professional and public-service values. Some of the changes in managerial practice, such as cultural distance, middle-management roles and structures, and managing staff, are analyzed. (Contains 44 references.) (RJM)

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Paper presented at the
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Managerialism and education: interpreting the evolving process of educational reform in England and Wales

Tim Simkins

Introduction

Since the late 1980's the British educational system has experienced a roller-coaster of policy changes. The focus and content of these changes have varied over time and among different parts of the educational system. Yet they have been driven by a clear underlying rationale:

> '[T]he great insight that Thatcherism took from the economic discourse was the value of targeting reform at institutional level. This recognises that social action is constituted in, as well as constrained by, distinctive practices of organising... [and] ... these practices are manipulable. Strategically pulling levers for change reshapes the institutional context within which the work of educating proceeds' (Seddon, 1997, p. 181)

The educational reform process has framed these levers of change in two main ways. The first, which has dominated much of the discourse about reform, involves the manipulation of the environment within which institutions operate to produce a system of incentives that are, in their specifics, independent of direct policy control. Policy determines the broad framework of incentives (the rules of the game) but does not intervene directly to determine how individual institutions will respond to the regime created. Decentralisation of powers to the institutional level and the creation of quasi-markets involve incentives of this type. It is assumed that the pressures arising from choices made by parents and others will lead institutions to adapt their provision to more closely meet the needs and expectations of 'customers' and that institutions that fail to do so will wither.

However, alongside this indirect approach to the creation of incentives for change has been a second approach that is very different. This involves the use of Government power to determine the broad aims, purposes and structure of the system and the performance criteria which institutional level providers must satisfy and to prescribe, approve or monitor the organisational and management strategies adopted by individual institutions. The mechanisms here – for example, specification of the curriculum or teaching methods, inspection or target setting - are all based on the specification of explicit expectations about the performance of institutions and the establishment of surveillance mechanisms to establish compliance together with sanctions for underperformance. It is this centralising dimension of policy change that has given the whole process its roller-coaster dimension and has created complex and ever-changing challenges for schools and colleges.

These two forms of control – the indirect and the direct – have become central to the policy agenda in many parts of the public sector over the last 15 years. According to Clarke and Newman (1997), they place each organisation in a new field of forces:

> 'The vertical axis aligns agencies as delegated authorities between the centralised power of the nation state and the "consumer" power of the periphery, while subjecting them to more rigorous financial and performance evaluation. The horizontal axis characteristically positions them in a nexus of marketised or quasi-competitive relationships. Within this field of forces agencies are typically given the "freedom to manage"' (p.30)

It is this 'repositioning' of organisations within the public sector of education which provides the context for this paper. It begins by outlining the similarities and differences between the policy context facing schools and colleges in terms of Clarke and Newman's new field of forces. These changes are then related to the concept of 'managerialism', which is becoming

an increasing important part of the discourse about public sector reform in the UK. The paper then proceeds to review some of the changes which appear to be taking place in the management of schools and colleges as a result of reforms before drawing some general conclusions the factors which may have affected the different experiences of institutions as those within them have attempted to respond to the new pressures which they face.

The policy context for schools and colleges: variations on a theme

Policy developments in the schools sector and in further and higher[1] education have shown important similarities. In each case institutions' links with their local education authorities (LEAs) have been significantly reduced or removed altogether and high degrees of autonomy have been granted in relation, in particular, to resource management. Similarly, within both sectors mechanisms have been established to enhance the competitive pressures which institutions face. However, there have also been profound differences in the ways in which policy has been applied in the different sectors. In this paper we will explore this issue with respect to two sectors: schools and further education. In order to do this we need, first, to outline the policy environments in which each has had to operate.

The policy framework *for schools* was established initially by the Education Reform Act of 1988 and modified by later legislation. Under these arrangements governing bodies of 'locally-managed' and 'grant-maintained' schools have been granted considerable powers to manage their own affairs, including the management of block budgets out of which the great majority of their resources must be funded. These budgets are determined by pupil number-led formulae that LEAs determine within government guidelines. The funding mechanism, therefore, is designed to provide schools with incentives to maintain and enhance their enrolment, within a context of enhanced parental choice.

These aspects of government policy – devolved government, formula funding and enhanced parental choice – have, despite some changes in detail, been the constants of the policy environment facing schools since the late 1980s. However, for most schools, at least as important as these aspects of policy, have been other powerful non-financial control mechanisms which have been designed to constrain the nature of the choices which schools make in the deployment of their resources. These policies have focussed directly on the curriculum, the means by which it is delivered and the results achieved. A constant theme has been the use of published test and examination results to judge the performance of schools, but, beyond this, the relative emphasis that has been given to particular aspects of policy has varied over the period since 1988. Initially the focus was on the National Curriculum so that for a number of years thinking in the majority of schools was dominated by twin imperatives of delivering the National Curriculum and implementing devolution. From around 1992, however, a new policy pressure emerged: a regime of regular inspection with the requirement for schools to produce action plans following such inspections (and the monitoring of their implementation in the case of schools deemed to be failing). Since then, the prospect and the experience of inspection has emerged as a dominant pressure for many schools, placing stress on senior managers and staff alike as they have prepared for and responded to inspection visits.

Since the May 1998 general election, further themes have emerged, particularly the requirement for schools (and LEAs) to set targets for the improvement of student achievements as the focus for planning, and centrally-driven recommendations on the organisation of teaching (DfEE, 1997a and b). Indeed, an analysis of the current situation would suggest that the new Labour Government is placing less emphasis on indirect incentive regimes of the quasi-market, and relying much more on the placing of demanding expectations directly on institutions with the possibility of intervention when they are deemed not to be achieving them. There would seem to be two reasons for this: first, impatience with

the assumed imprecision and unpredictability of less direct mechanisms; and, second, concern about some of the equity effects of quasi-market solutions to the 'problem' of school quality.[2]

The policy framework for *colleges* was established by the Further and Higher Education Act of 1992. Under this, colleges were granted full legal autonomy as corporations, with responsibility for staff, assets and financial management, with their core funding provided on a formula basis. However, compared with the schools sector, the funding mechanism for colleges has been used more directly, more centrally and more ambitiously as a policy tool. Unlike the schools sector where, despite strong central government steers, responsibility for funding is distributed among, currently, more than 170 local education authorities, all institutions in the colleges sector receive substantial parts of their funding directly from one of two national funding councils (one for England and one for Wales). Furthermore, again unlike the schools sector, this funding is provided on the basis of contracts which colleges make with the councils to deliver specified levels of provision at specified unit costs, with colleges bidding for resources in relation to criteria established on an annual basis by the funding councils. This means that the councils can, and do, use their funding mechanisms explicitly to achieve particular policy goals that are derived in substantial part from government policy. The Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) in its early years has sought to achieve the following through its the mechanism of formula funding:

- to encourage growth through enabling colleges to bid for additional funding for student numbers beyond a core level;
- to encourage efficiency (or, more specifically, to encourage high cost colleges to reduce their unit costs) by seeking a convergence of the level of unit funding across the sector;
- to reduce wastage and increase achievement by tying some funding to successful learning outcomes.

Thus while all parts of the educational system have been subject to significant resource constraints, the pressures for increases in resource efficiency have been much greater for colleges than for schools as the Government has pursued a policy of substantially increasing participation while constraining expenditure.

As in the schools sector, these funding mechanisms have been complemented by other non-financial quality assurance mechanisms, particularly inspection, and by a range of documentary imperatives, including requirements for strategic plans, college charters, disability statements and learner agreements for each individual student. These have not, however, significantly qualified the enormous power of the funding mechanism as an influential policy driver (Bradley, 1996).

It might be expected that these similarities and differences between the policy pressures facing schools and colleges would lead to different responses by those who lead and manage them. The remainder of this paper will explore this question. First, however we need to consider some conceptual issues: in particular the debate about managerialism in the public sector.

The rise of managerialism?

In a seminal paper, Kouzes and Mico (1979) argued that 'human service organisations' in the public sector operate simultaneously in a number of 'domains', each of which has a rather different set of legitimising norms which generate particular kinds of governing principles, success measures, structural arrangements and work modes. These domains are: the 'policy domain' of representative government; the 'management domain' of hierarchical authority; and the 'service domain' of professional support for clients. Kouzes and Mico argue that the natural condition of such organisations is a state of tension as each domain struggles to maintain its own integrity and reinforce its own standards within the organisation. I have

argued elsewhere (Simkins, 1997) that this kind of analysis is particularly fruitful in analysing the underlying changes in power distribution sought by the educational reforms of the last decade. In particular, these reforms have sought to introduce new forms of accountability which: disempower the service (professional) domain; redistribute power in the policy domain from local representative government towards central government and its agencies and newly constituted governing bodies of institutions; and empower 'consumers' directly through marketisation.

However, the domain that is of most interest in the context of this paper is the 'management domain'. There is considerable interest in the broader public service literature in the United Kingdom in the development of 'managerialism' (Pollitt, 1993; Clarke and Newman, 1997), which is often argued to be challenging or even replacing earlier forms of 'order' in the public sector. For example, Clarke and Newman (1997) argue that an 'organisational settlement' between two modes of co-ordination – bureaucratic administration and professionalism (which they link as 'bureau-professionalism') – which dominated the public sector much of the post-war period is being challenged by a new set of managerialist assumptions. Gewirtz *et. al.* (1995) have applied a similar distinction specifically to schooling. These analyses suggest that such organisational ideologies can be distinguished along a number of dimensions.

First, bureau-professionalism is characterised by a series of cross-cutting *attachments* to client-centred, professional and public service values, such as equity and care, whereas managerialism is characterised by commitment to the over-riding values and mission of the specific organisation. Such attachments are derived from different forms of socialisation: managers within bureau-professional systems are socialised within the specific professional field in which their organisation is located, for example education or health, whereas managers within more managerialist systems are socialised directly into the values of 'management' as a generic discipline. Second, bureau-professionalism is characterised by *decision-making* through a combination of bureaucratic rules and professional discretion and judgement, whereas managerial decision-making is characterised by discretion entrusted to those holding clearly identified managerial roles and authority and who use specialist management techniques to help them make choices. It is assumed that such techniques for achieving better management are knowable; indeed they are known and generally applicable – they can often be found in best practice in the private sector. Thirdly, bureau-professional *agendas* are based on the assessed needs of individual clients and client groups while those of managerialism derive from concerns focussing around organisational objectives and outcomes and the deployment of resources. Finally, the *norms* of bureau-professionalism are defined in terms of needs and rights of clients while those of managerialism are based on concepts of efficiency, organisational performance and customer-orientation.

The bureaucratic-professional and managerial orders may be conceived in both normative and descriptive terms. In their normative or ideological form they represent sets of values and ideals which provide competing discourses to justify and explain particular policy and management regimes. In so doing they also embody contrasting assumptions about power and legitimacy. Thus bureau-professionalism gives primacy to the roles of the professional and the public service bureaucrat; managerialism, in contrast, justifies and legitimates managerial power and challenges the values and power bases embodied in the 'traditional' bureaucratic-professional settlement. It requires that managers be given the 'freedom to manage', which in turn implies delegation of power within managerial hierarchies and may also imply the disempowerment of other groups such as political representatives and workers, including professional workers.

Alongside their normative content, however, these ideas have considerable potential for describing and analysing change in public service organisations, including those in the education sector. Viewed from this perspective, managerialism provides a framework, not just

for analysing the discourses which justify and legitimate change, but also for exploring the particular arrangements which are developed to translate policy agendas and goals into practical organisational consequences in particular situations. The rest of this paper will consider in the ways in which the policy changes described earlier have impacted on the management of schools and colleges.

Changes in managerial practice

A focus on the organisation and its leadership

There can be little doubt that both the direct and indirect components of the reforms in both the schools and the colleges sectors have reframed thinking about the purposes and outcomes of education to place the primary focus on the performance of the individual school or college. This does not mean that the dimensions of the individual pupil or student or of the wider local and national system have been lost. Indeed, in both sectors, greater emphasis is being given to the development of sophisticated tracking systems to monitor the performance of individual students, and in the schools sector LEAs as well as individual institutions are being required to achieve ambitious targets in relation to pupil performance. Rather, the new emphasis sees effective management *at the level of the school or college* as the primary means by which policy goals are to be achieved and the place where the educational 'buck' stops. This is true both in relation to the indirect pressures of the quasi-market, and the publication of information which is designed to facilitate its operation, and the more direct policy mechanisms of the central government and the funding councils. A major consequence is a reframing of the roles of senior managers.

It seems clear from all the literature on the consequences of reform that, despite *de jure* empowering of governing bodies, one of the major consequences of devolution has, in fact, been an increase in the powers of senior managers, especially headteachers and principals. This has been a natural consequence of two related facets of the new policy world: centrally-driven attachments and agendas which emphasise the overall performance of the institution above all other measures of success and the unprecedented degree to which individual leaders are now held responsible for that performance. Thus Hall and Southworth (1997) suggest that:

> 'heads have become more overtly aware of their schools' levels of success. Several factors have contributed to this move.... All these have caused heads to monitor and evaluate trends in the schools performance. ... They are apparently taking a stronger interest in outcomes and the school's "product"' (p. 166)

Similarly in further education, a more robust approach to the quantitative measurement of performance has powerful effects on those aspects of the institution to which senior management attention is addressed (Elliott and Crossley, 1994).

The idea of strong and effective leadership seems to have attained a pre-eminent position in the discourse of school management in England and Wales. It is quintessentially embodied in the priority given by the Government to national leadership qualifications, especially the new National Professional Qualification for Headship. In part, no doubt, this emphasis reflects the current attention given to leadership within the wider management discourse. However, it also reflects the emphasis which, for example, the school effectiveness literature and the work of Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and the Teacher Training Agency have given to the role of the headteacher. In further education, similar trends can be identified. The pressures created by incorporation for principals of colleges have been enormous[5], but the power and status of those who have survived seems to have been significantly enhanced and reframed by their typical designation as 'chief executives' of 'corporations'.

Within this broad framework of senior management empowerment, however, two sub-themes can be identified. First, there seems to have been trend toward greater focussing of power at the top through a restructuring of senior management positions. Thus in both secondary schools and colleges the number of deputy heads and assistant principals has often decreased while, even in the primary sector, there have been examples of schools not reappointing to the post of deputy head when the incumbent leaves. Paradoxically, however, the increase in powers and accountability of senior managers may also have led to a greater sharing of responsibility *within* these smaller senior management teams. Hall and Southworth (1997) make this point about secondary schools, while Menter *et. al.* (1995) note the development of senior management teams (SMTs) or analogous structural forms in some primary schools. In further education Ainley and Bailey (1997) found that, in both the colleges they studied, the SMT is 'a small and cohesive group of people very different from the old hierarchy of Principal, Deputy and the Heads of Department' (p. 40).

Secondly, as senior managers have become more powerful, the nature of their work seems to have changed. It has certainly become more intense (Webb and Vulliamy, 1996; Jephcote, *et. al.*, 1996), but its emphasis has also changed. For many writers this change can be related to Hughes' seminal distinction, in relation to headteachers, between the roles of 'leading professional' and 'chief executive' (Hughes, 1985). Indeed, managerialism might be argued to be virtually synonymous with the predominance of the chief executive role. Thus Raab *et. al.* report growing 'tensions between [heads'] traditional role as educational leaders concerned with curriculum development, teaching and learning, and their new role as financial managers' (1997, pp. 151), while Jephcote *et. al.*, note similarly that the focus of principals has become 'the organisation and financial management of the corporation… [C]urriculum matters have generally not been amongst the main current concerns of principals and boards of governors' (1996, p. 44).

Cultural distance

One of the major consequences of the empowerment of senior staff, the 'drawing in' of senior management teams and the increasing focus of their work on the broad policy of the institution and its place in the wider world seems to have been an increasing distancing of senior managers from other staff. For example, some writers on the consequences of local management of schools, particularly those writing about secondary education, have identified an increasing 'division of values and purposes' (Bowe and Ball, 1992, p. 58) between the 'corporatist' views of senior managers whose prime concern is with the school as a whole and its relationship with its external environment, and the more 'individualist' orientation of teachers whose prime concern is with the needs of individual pupils (Simkins, 1994). Some have gone so far as to suggest the development of 'schizoid organisations' (Broadbent, *et. al.*, 1992). A similar distancing has been widely commented on in the colleges sector. As Ainley and Bailey argue: 'While integration amongst the [senior management] team increases … there is a danger for them to cut themselves off from other areas of college' (1997, p. 42). For example, one study contrasts the perspectives of senior managers, 'who were very concerned with the survival of their colleges', with those of lecturers, among whom 'there appeared to be little awareness or concern for the substantial financial pressures that were motivating the senior management' (Hewitt and Crawford, 1997, 118-9 and 125).

When this idea of 'cultural distancing' is explored further a number of issues arise. First, the structural implications of 'distance' itself are interesting. For example, there appear to be contrasts in the ways in which organisational 'layering' is being managed in schools and colleges. In many primary schools new management layers are being created with clearer roles for deputy heads and curriculum co-ordinators where previously there was only 'the traditional two-tier model' of head and classroom teachers. This may be having the effect of reducing the direct influence of classroom teachers on school policy (Webb and Vulliamy, 1996, p. 447). In contrast, in the college sector 'delayering' has been common, partly to

establish clearer lines of accountability but also as a source of financial savings. However, it has been argued that this, too, has been accompanied by an increase in the distance *between* managerial layers, with less emphasis on management through face-to-face communication and greater use of new technologies (Ainley and Bailey, 1997, p,. 52-53).

Such changes in structures and communication patterns raise important questions about the ways in which organisational cultures are evolving. There is a good deal of debate about the degree to which the management of schools and colleges has become, or is becoming, more or less participative as the consequences of the reform process work through. In the primary sector, for example, some studies claim to have found 'a small shift to towards a top-down directive approach to management and a larger shift towards "managed participation" and away from a fuller form of collaborative collegiality' (Menter *et. al.*, 1995, p. 303). Others, in contrast, argue that, their research shows 'no evidence to support the view that, as primary schools become more autonomous, there is a shift away from collective decision-making to towards a more top-down or directive approach to management' (Bell, *et. al.*, 1996, p. 259). Similarly, while Gewirtz *et. al.* identify 'a tendency towards speedier and non-consultative or pseudo-consultative decision-making by management' in secondary schools (1995, p. 97), Hall and Southworth suggest that '[t]he belief in heads monopolising leadership is at the very least softening. ... [T]here is an increasing reliance on shared leadership' (1997, p. 165).

The ambiguities here are considerable. Differences may arise from the sample of schools chosen in particular studies, from the methods used (for example, interviewing heads only or a wider variety of staff) or from the ways in which evidence is actually interpreted. The difficulties are well-illustrated by a paper, which sees simultaneous pressures in the primary sector both 'to break down the private individualistic culture of schools and replace it with one characterised by openness, trust and collaboration' and 'to promote ... managerialism and the directive styles of headteachers associated with it' (Webb and Vulliamy, 1996, p. 455). As Hall and Southworth argue:

> 'Notions of empowerment and transformational leadership suggest that heads and others interested in school leadership are still wrestling with the perennial challenge of establishing and sustaining a balance between, on the one hand, control of the organisation and, on the other, staff participation and involvement. It appears that there is presently a trend towards increased levels of participation; but whether this is because heads believe it is necessary for pragmatic reasons or because heads in the 1990s have increasingly strong principles about democratic organisation and which to create schools which are communities is uncertain.' (1997, p. 165)

Similar issues arise in further education. For example, Jephcote *et. al.* note 'how different principals sought to either increase or decease [the] sense of alienation' resulting from incorporation. 'Several principals described how they went to great lengths to involve staff in the changes and to keep them informed... Others, however, deliberately engineered a situation where staff were excluded' (1996, p. 39).

Middle management roles and structures

With changing roles for senior managers and their increasing distancing from other staff, it is to be expected that the roles of those holding other leadership and management positions would also change. The evidence here is rather less clear, but a trend can be identified towards the establishment of more clearly defined 'middle management' roles within tighter managerial structures. The term 'middle manager' means different things in the secondary and primary school contexts. In the former it increasingly means heads of subject departments with line responsibility for groups of staff (Harris, *et. al.*, 1995), whereas in the latter it means deputy heads and co-ordinators who typically have school-wide responsibility for areas of the curriculum (Webb and Vulliamy, 1996). In both cases however, such roles are being more

clearly defined and clearer lines of accountability established, although the process has inevitably gone further in secondary schools. This trend is likely to increase as a result of current developments such as the Government's proposals for the teacher appraisal (Morris, 1998).

The much greater complexity and variety of work of the typical college compared to that of schools, and the greater financial pressures to which many colleges have been subjected, has raised particular issues in relation to the role of middle managers in that sector. Resource accountability in particular seems to be being pushed lower and lower For example, Carroll *et. al.* (1996) suggest that 'caseloading' is being explored as a method through which individual lecturers and teams might be given responsibility for using the flexibility associated with a high degree of delegation of the staffing resource to deliver targets for recruitment, retention and student achievement derived from college's FEFC contracts. Such developments suggest that the increased distancing of senior managers and other staff described in the previous section may, paradoxically, be accompanied by approaches to management which significantly reduce the degree of 'loose coupling' which has often been claimed as a key characteristic of many educational organisation. In such circumstances it is perhaps not surprising, as one study finds, that a very strong tension has emerged for many middle managers 'between a sense of being impelled by finance and a real struggle to retain student need as a basis for decisions' (Lumby, 1996, p. 336).

One general issue concerning middle managers which cuts across sectors is that increasing numbers of staff are now expected to come to terms with the fact they that they *are* middle managers, whatever this may mean. As one Head of School in a college is quoted as saying: '[O]ver the last five or six years my role has changed from being a teacher and doing some management to being a manager and doing some teaching' (quoted in Ainley and Bailey, 1997, p. 57). In schools, too, even where an individual's teaching load has not changed, similar changes in role understanding are expected.

Managing staff

In both the schools and further education sectors, legislation has given governing bodies greater powers to establish personnel policies to meet the needs of their institutions. Such freedoms have been considerably less in the schools sector – basic salary scales and conditions of service continue to be determined nationally for most schools. Nevertheless, within these, governing bodies may award additional salary points for excellent performance as well as defined responsibilities and they are required to review the performance of the headteacher annually and to determine his or her salary accordingly. Evidence suggests that most governing bodies are using these powers minimally or not at all as a means of managing staff, and personnel management issues have not been significant at an institutional level for many schools.

In contrast, perhaps *the* major issue in the colleges sector since incorporation has been that of staff management. Pressures on costs, much more severe than in the schools sector, have focused attention on the staff resource in particular. The experiences of 'downsizing' and 'delayering' have been common, while major pressures have been exerted on teaching staff to increase the intensification of their work through the renegotiation of contracts. This has been a major factor in the distancing of senior managers described earlier and has undoubtedly made it more difficult to maintain more open management styles. Nevertheless, differences have been observed among colleges in their approaches to this issue. Thus Bassett-Jones and Brewer (1997) link strategies of human resource management to broader college strategies. They contrast strategies which focus on cost leadership with those based on differentiation of quality, arguing that the former are associated with human resource strategies based on a core-periphery model with increasing reliance on part-time and contract staff, while the latter

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favour strategies based around the levels of commitment which having a high proportion of full-time staff provides.

Organisational Planning

How have the ways in which decisions are taken and control established changed as a result of the reforms? One common feature in all sectors has been the institutionalisation of planning – school development planning in the schools sector and strategic planning in colleges.

Although it is not a statutory requirement in the schools sector, strong government advice supported by the expectations generated by the inspection framework make it difficult for schools to avoid at least creating the appearance of planning. Indeed, as a minimum all schools are legally required to produce an action plan in response to inspection recommendations. It is clear, however, that the idea of development planning can be interpreted in many ways. Thus studies in the primary sector have found "different approaches to authorship, involvement and consultation from those who felt that it was simplest [for heads] to prepare the plan themselves and then to persuade the staff and governors that it was right to those who sought a more interactive, developmental approach" (Menter *et. al.*, 1995, p. 308). A major study of primary school planning (MacGilchrist *et. al.*, 1995) identifies four types of planning ranging from the 'rhetorical' to the 'corporate'. Similar differences have been found in secondary schools (Sutton, 1994; Glover *et. al.*, 1996b). However, while MacGilchrist *et. al.* (1995) suggest that 'corporate planning' – which could be described as the most 'managerial' of the types they identify - is likely to be the most effective, Glover *et. al.* (1996a and b) find that schools which are deemed to be effective seem to differ in the degree to which they adopt centralised and systematised approaches or retain more open and organic models. In other words, approaches to planning can be consistent with a number of effective leadership and management styles.

In the colleges sector, strategic plans and planning appear to be both major expressions of organisational culture and an important means of influencing it. The funding councils require the production of strategic plans and have imposed specific requirements, both for the content of plans and for the outline planning process which colleges should adopt. Nevertheless, it is probably much more broadly true of colleges than of schools that "from a senior and middle management perception, adopting the FEFC planning framework [is] not just lip service but [leads] to the creation of a better structured, more consistent planning process and thus a more effective service" (Drodge and Cooper, 1997, p. 47). There is some evidence that such planning is typically driven by "a broadly top-down approach to the mission of the college" (Drodge and Cooper, 1997, p. 38). However, as with schools, there is evidence of more variation in the planning process itself and in the types of strategies which colleges embody in their plans. Thus Drodge and Cooper (1997), for example, found contrasts between, on the one hand, an approach in which strategic management realises the mission by fostering individual and collective learning and, on the other, a managerially directive approach in which the role of strategic management is to define college purpose and direction and then secure commitment to it" (1997, p. 46).

Conclusion

In summary, the evidence, limited and sometimes ambiguous as it is, seems to suggest that policy developments in both the schools and colleges sectors have, indeed, been accompanied by a move towards managerialism within institutions. In terms of each of Clarke and Newman's dimensions – attachments, decision-making, agendas and norms – the managerial is challenging the bureau-professional order. The tensions which this creates between 'old' and 'new' orders, and the different ways in which individuals and organisations respond to these, have been noted by writers in all sectors of education from primary (Webb and

Vulliamy, 1996), through secondary (Power *et. al.*, 1997) and further (Elliott and Hall, 1994) to higher (Dearlove, 1997). However, it also seems to be the case that both the nature of the accommodation that is occurring between the orders and the form that the managerialist component is taking varies between and within sectors.

In part this divergence arises because, as was described earlier, there are significant differences among policy environments in different sectors despite superficial appearances of convergence. These different policy environments have potentially significant implications for the organisational and managerial responses which schools and colleges develop in response to policy pressures. Thus, there seems little doubt that the severe funding pressures which are being placed on further education colleges are causing the efficiency objective to dominate over almost all others (Lumby, 1996; Elliott and Crossley, 1997) and a 'hard' approach being taken frequently to human resource management (Elliott and Hall, 1994). In contrast, the government is establishing a climate in the schools sector which is essentially 'effectiveness-focussed', albeit on the basis of an agenda which is tightly controlled from the centre and defines effectiveness in quite narrow ways (Gewirtz, *et. al.*, 1995). Thus for many heads over the last few years inspection as been seen 'a major, possibly the most significant, test of their professional credibility' (Hall and Southworth, 1997, p. 158). Now the agenda seems likely to switch further to nationally-imposed processes of target-setting at system, local and individual school levels.

Internal factors are probably at work as well in the schools and colleges sectors (as well as in different phases of the schools sector). Each sector has had significantly different cultural characteristics, and these have no doubt caused or allowed many institutions to respond to external pressures in different ways. Nevertheless, consideration of the complexity of the change process which schools and colleges have gone through should lead us to be cautious about making easy generalisations about patterns of change. While sector differences seem to be important, a number of other points need to be made.

First, it is important not idealise the situation before the reforms, as some of the more radical critiques of managerialism seem to do. For example, even before the 1988 Act, the 'pivotal, proprietal and paternalistic' role of primary headteachers (Hall and Southworth, 1997, p. 153) and the 'extraordinary centrality of the Headteacher in British [secondary] schools' (Torrington and Weightman, 1989, p. 135) were noted. Similarly, while some writers on primary schools have found greater degrees of collaboration at an organisational level than would typically be found in secondary schools or colleges (Nias, *et. al.* 1989), it is also true that a culture of teacher autonomy and independence, certainly in relation to professional matters, was probably just as common. In this context, it would appear that, while in some schools the reforms may have threatened pre-existing collaborative relationships, in others they have encouraged the replacement of a culture of autonomy by more collegial relationships, albeit primarily of the 'contrived' rather than the truly collaborative type (Hargreaves, 1994). Similarly in further education, it has been argued that the new managerialism often presented itself as a modernising alternative, offering new opportunities for coherence and efficiency in college policies in contrast to the perpetual 'Wars of Roses' which arose from departmentally-based 'feudal' college structures (Ainley and Bailey, 1997, p. 40).

Secondly, although the reform process began in 1988, the process of radical policy development and implementation is still continuing as was noted at the beginning of this paper. Thus the position at any point in time is likely to be an unstable one. For example, the pressures of devolution, which placed major new resource management responsibilities on schools at the end of the 1980s and led to the findings about growing cultural distance between senior staff and others, have been replaced by pressures which are much more tightly targeted on the quality of teaching and learning and educational outcomes. This in turn may

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lead to further changes in school cultures. It is far from certain, therefore, that cultural distancing will be a permanent phenomenon.

Thirdly, it is extremely important to note that significant differences in responses to policy pressures have been observed *within* sectors as well as between sectors. Some examples have been noted earlier. One reason for this lies in the widely differing positions that institutions found themselves on the introduction of devolution and marketisation. For example, the experiences of individual colleges have been heavily influenced by their relative unit costs and hence the scale of their required efficiency savings (Bassett-Jones and Brewer, 1997). Individual school experiences, in contrast, have depended strongly on the relative competitiveness of the local market arenas in which they have found themselves (Simkins, 1994; Bullock and Thomas, 1997).

This brings us to our final point. It seems clear that the response of individual managers to the situation with which they are faced can and does vary markedly. For example, Grace distinguishes between categories of secondary school heads who have differed markedly in their responses to policy changes: 'headteacher-managers', 'headteacher-professionals' and 'headteacher' resistors'. Such a distinction perhaps explains in part Gewirtz *et. al's* (1995) finding that some secondary heads have 'enthusiastically embraced the new language and culture of management' while others – the majority – have been 'reluctantly implicated' and have maintained '[a] strong adherence to comprehensivism or bureau-professional modes of operation... combined with a grudging acceptance of market imperatives' (pp. 99, 101).In further education, the pre-existing culture is likely to have created fewer difficulties for many principals, although there, too, reservations about the new market-oriented culture have been noted (Jephcote, *et. al.*, 1996).

This evidence about differing managerial responses to environmental pressures supports evidence from other parts of the public sector that suggests, not only that managerialism can take many forms but also that:

> 'professionalism intersects with, rather than being displaced by, managerialism.... New goals, identities and allegiances are likely to exist alongside old formations rather than displacing them... Generic managerialism has to be enacted within the context of producing particular public gods and services. Its own "mission" (the pursuit of greater productivity or efficiency) cannot effectively substitute for specific service goals and the forms of expertise needed to achieve them' (Clarke and Newman, 1997, p. 102-103).

The ways in which these competing ideologies interact to produce new cultural and organisational forms will be a major question for research over the coming years. This paper has suggested that, while the ways in which the 'top leadership' evolves is an important theme, there are others. These include: the ways in which senior managers as a group work together; the degree to which cultural distance becomes an entrenched characteristic of educational organisations, reinforced perhaps by particular forms of structure and personnel management practices; and the ways in which those at lower levels construct, or allowed to construct, their roles.

Notes

1 Higher education is not the subject of this paper.

2 It should be noted that the Government, while increasing directive pressure in these ways, is also reducing the degree of prescription in the National Curriculum, and has stated its intention to increase the proportion of funding devolved to schools.

3 A third of college principals left their posts within the first three years after incorporation. Attrition among headteachers has also been high.

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